**Rationale**

VERY IMPORTANT*Your rationale should focus on the following questions: How did you make the topic meaningful for students? How did you make use of inquiry? What are the ways in which you assessed student learning? How did you take account of students' prior experiences and knowledge? How will you sequence lessons so that they support the understanding of the learning outcomes? How will you help students make sense of the materials? Please make use of class readings and discussions in writing your rationale. The rationale is important because it serves as evidence that you are thinking about the unit like a teacher, i.e. going beyond "writing plans" to thinking about how you are going to engage your students with a topic in a way that builds over two or three weeks.*

I tried to make this unit meaningful for students by incorporating activities that link what they are learning with their lives. An example would be in the lesson on membranes; their homework is to find examples of manmade membranes. Also in the transport lesson they are to find 2 pictures, 1 that describes active transport and 1 that describes passive transport. These types of activities will allow them to form connections to things they are familiar with in their everyday life. I also tried to incorporate a level of inquiry. In the or organelle lab activity they not only have to recall the organelles in the cell but also where they are located, there function, and what they look like in order to create their 3D model.

This unit also contains a variety of both formal and informal assessments. Each lesson incorporates group discussions because I feel that given the opportunity to “bounce” ideas off of others helps clarify concepts and allows students to answer their own questions. Also since students “speak their own language” they can sometimes convey difficult concepts to their peers more effectively than a teacher can. These discussions are a form of informal assessment because it allows me to see which students seem to understand the material and those that are struggling. It will also inform me on the topics that may need to be reviewed. Homework assignments, quizzes and lab activities are examples of the formal assessments that will be used in this unit. Homework assignments will be used to as a way to reinforce that day’s material and allow me to see where the students stand in their understanding and also to see which areas need to be reviewed. Quizzes along with the lab activities are used more to assess what the students are retaining, not just during that period but throughout the unit to make sure the information is “sticking”. It is also a way to connect new material to older material and to review that older material.

In order to make sure all students are grasping the material, I will make use of mnemonics, videos, power point presentations, and hands on activities. I will also be available for after school help and try and differentiate my instruction depending on the student that is having difficulty, such as providing a text in a lower reading level, provide peer tutors, and any other accommodations that may be needed in order to ensure that no one is left behind.

I have created this unit to convey the important information in a variety of ways in order to keep the students engaged and excited about what they are learning. I have included projects that allow for student creativity, labs that (I feel) are exciting and different, activities that includes food, (which in high school is always a hit). Group discussions to engage the class as a group and allows for the students to feel a part of their learning and have the ability to express their thoughts and opinions. Learning about the cell can be a difficult and boring task. I hope this unit will allow my students to still learn what they need to know but also to actually see and appreciate how amazing the cell actually is. This part can easily get lost in the mist of definitions, functions, and cycles, but is in my opinion, the most important part.